

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

'LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!'—Goethe.

'WHATEVER DOTH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT.'—Paul.

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NOTES BY THE WAY.

To 'worldly men,' the venerable prayer, 'Thy kingdom come,' is either unmeaning or an idle dream, but, to the spiritual observer, it is being answered, though slowly and in unexpected ways. According to Ersted, 'that which is does not exist a moment by itself.' Every atom is subject to perpetual change, and the change points to the complete development and achievement of the rational Divine Idea in Nature.

The same seer declared that there is always an element of vulgarity in irreverence, especially when it fails to recognise anything deeper than the human in Life.

It is, however, a consolation to know that irreverence is fading. There is little of it in Agnosticism, and not much of it left in Theology. When we reflect upon what *has been*, how great is the change! how much nearer the Kingdom! What enormous accelerations of sense and true reverence have followed the 'Higher Criticism' of the past twenty years! What vast changes are due to modern science and modern civilisation!

There was a time when 'witches' were burned or drowned at the behest or with the connivance of the legal leaders of men, and when the prophets were stoned by the vulgar who considered that those who questioned 'established' beliefs must be instigated by the devil: and so, helpless or, as it often happened, specially sensitive women, and men who were modern Christs, and scientific explorers, have been sacrificed at the altar of darkness. Not yet is all this at an end, but it is obviously ending, for God has decreed the triumph of the True and Good.

A good many of us are wavering as to whether the so-called 'lower animals' have souls. It is not easy to say precisely what a soul is. There is a sense in which it is true that a grain of wheat has a soul. Probably the idea of personal consciousness, and conscious personality, is essential to the idea of soul. In that case, some lower animals run some human animals very close. Will the following true story help?—

A certain farmer owns a very large shepherd dog, noted throughout the neighbourhood for his anything but friendly greeting of strangers and his entire devotion to his master's horses. He spends nearly all his time with them in stable and pasture.

One day one of the teams had been turned out for exercise in a small field, close to the roadway. Just beyond the road lay a bundle of cornstalks which had fallen from one of the loads brought up the day before. The horses saw it and wanted

it, as was evidenced by their longing glances and the stretching of their heads over the fence in a vain endeavour to reach it.

Prince, who had gone down to the field to see his friends, stood watching them closely. Presently he trotted off down the field to where one of the fence boards had become loose and dropped down at one end. Slipping through, he went back to the bundle of stalks, seized it, and, dragging it along to the hole in the fence, pulled it through, having considerable trouble with it in so doing, and finally placed it before the horses, who at once began eating it. Prince stood by, panting, wagging his bushy tail, and evidently highly pleased with the whole performance.

'If there wasn't thought and reasoning there, I don't know where you'd find it!' said one of the men, who had been an interested spectator.

A writer in 'Harper's' (E. S. Martin) speculates with knowledge on one of the mysteries of high-class writing which really has often something uncanny about it. It may, of course, be practice, or some special normal facility, which gives to certain writers their peculiar felicity or charm; but the writers themselves frequently suspect or are conscious of someone operating behind the scenes.

This applies to all kinds of subjects; scientific as well as poetic, and gay as well as grave. We talk of 'inspirational writing,' but would find a difficulty in saying what we mean. If we confine the phrase to something like automatic and unreflective writing we may be covering only a very small part of the field. A writer would need careful watching in order to ascertain when his writing became automatic and unreflective. Probably, to trace and detect that is impossible. Mr. Martin shrewdly says:—

The mind's automatic action is a very important phase of its activities. It keeps going all the time, and strikes a good many sparks on its own hook. Once a good mind has been headed on a certain course, it is apt to hold that course more or less closely, or at least to revert to it, until it arrives somewhere; and this it will often do whether its owner keeps his watch at the wheel or not. I think that most writers, when they have got some particularly good idea into some particularly lucid and effective form of words, often feel that the job is only partly of their doing, and that a good deal of it, and probably the very best of it, came to them by processes more or less independent of their volition. Nobody writes without putting his will into the work and making the indispensable effort; but what comes is partly what is in him, and partly what is given him to say, and which is which he may not know, nor whence came what was given. What we call literary talent, or, in its rarer and more remarkable form, genius, seems to be the gift of having extra good ideas come into the mind and clothe themselves with extra good language. Very young writers have sometimes powers of expression which persons less lucky never get. There is an ear for language like the ear for music, and akin to it.

That is very true, and the point is this: given an ear for the music of thoughts and words, how far is it possible or likely that the unseen people use that ear for their own music?

There are many reasons why people do not go to church. Here is one. The story was given as from a most reliable old gentleman, who said:—

When I was a youngster, I was induced by someone to go to Sunday-school. They gave me a chapter in the Catechism

to learn ; and, though I couldn't understand much of it, I had a good memory, and learned it so I could repeat it like a parrot. There was one passage, however, that I could understand. I had had no religious instruction, and came to it unbiassed by any early training. The question was, 'Doth eternal sin wholly defile you, and is it sufficient to send you to hell, though you commit no other sin?' The answer in the book was 'Yes.' I read it over once or twice, and thought it was a typographical error. So I took my penknife and carefully cut out the word, 'Yes,' and wrote beside the opening, in my unformed hand, the shorter and to me more correct word, 'No.' That question happened to come to me, and I boldly answered, 'No.'

'What,' said the teacher, 'No? You mean "Yes."'

'It is "no" in my book,' I replied.

'Impossible! Let me look at it.'

'The printer made a mistake, and I fixed it,' I replied without a tremor.

He took the book in his hand, glanced at it in horror, dropped it instantaneously, and in the twinkling of an eye had me by the collar. To say that I was astounded slightly expresses my feelings. About seven times he jerked me back and forth in a perfect fury. When he let go, I walked out of the church, and have never been to church since.

That is a pity. The youngster had the making of a much-needed kind of minister in him.

'The Harbinger of Light' reports a Trance Address said to be by Dr. Channing on 'The Powers of the Mind.' It is little more than a summary of well-known Christian Science and 'New Thought' teaching, but it is useful and worth attention. Respecting the trance state, it is said that there is nothing unreasonable about it. 'If it be possible for a man in the flesh to hypnotise one of his fellows, then you would expect that when the spirit gains its highest activities out of the body it should be able to hypnotise its fellows, especially those with mediumistic gifts. It is possible that diseases of other persons may be cured by suggestion, because there is a powerful mind in the ascendancy.'

The speaker adopts the opinion that 'thoughts are substances' and finds in that truth the secret of prayer. 'For long years,' he says :—

People have wondered, while some have reviled and others sneered, at the power of prayer. Many people make the same mistake as the Pharisees of old, they stand at the street corners, so to speak, and lift up their voices that all may hear. It is not necessary even to move the lips in prayer, but simply to project the thought towards the object of your affection, and as thoughts are substances, they travel through the ethers and take effect. They are received in many cases by the mind of the one you are praying for.

Then follows a prophecy :—

The time is coming—I do not care if you believe it or not, because nearly all the statements that we make are laughed at, but in after years scientists prove them to be true—when you will be able to project a message to a friend 500 miles away. The trained mind will be able to project its message, and assuredly it will be received by the other mind and acted upon just as if sent from the telegraph office. This question has its dark side also, for if it is possible to do good it is also possible to injure. I know that there are myriads of people done to death by evil thoughts and malice of others. But I tell you for your consolation that the man living according to his light and conscience and in daily communication with the spirit world is guarded and protected in a manner in which other people are not. It is very hard, nay impossible, to break through such a guard, I assure you. That man or woman is safe against all evil influences.

That lively little print 'The Bookshelf' gives us the following paragraph :—

'John Jasper's Secret' was a fairly good piece of 'journeyman work,' as Carlyle would have called it, apart from the impudent title-page. This, however, cannot be said of the extraordinary production published in Brattleborough, Vermont, U.S.A., under the title of 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood Complete,' the second part of which professed to be by 'the spirit pen of Charles Dickens through a medium.' This 'completion' is known as the 'Brattleborough' edition, and if the

author of the perpetration knew how Dickens laughed Spiritualism, particularly the American brand, to scorn in the pages of 'Household Words' as we know now, he would have spared himself all the trouble he must have taken over his concoction.

Whatever does 'The Bookshelf' mean? We do not care a drop of spilt milk about Edwin Drood or the 'completion,' but why should a medium decline a Dickens message because Dickens once laughed at Spiritualism? and why should it be assumed that Dickens laughs at Spiritualism now? What is the good of dying if it does not rectify a good many laughs?

A MUTUAL APPARITION.

There are a few instances on record in which a person has had the impression of being at a distant place and witnessing what was happening there, and at the same time his form has been seen in that place. One such instance was recorded on p. 614 of 'LIGHT' for 1906, and another is reported by the New York 'World' as having occurred to the Rev. Henry Rollings, who is studying in New York for a career as a medical missionary. Mr. Rollings received his theological education in England, and was a curate under the Rev. Algernon S. Crapsey, the Rochester (N.Y.) clergyman who was declared to be a heretic for denying the physical resurrection. Mr. Rollings gives the following account of his experience :—

My father was Geoffrey Rollings, of Bedfordshire, England, and the tie between us was strong ; we kept in constant communication. After a particularly arduous day I fell into a slumber from which I was awakened by a vivid picture. I sat up in the bed and saw my father as distinctly as I ever saw him in my life and heard him call out : 'My boy, my boy, I am dying.'

The picture that was presented to me was that of my father lying in bed in a room I did not recognise. I could tell by the general furnishings that it was English. I saw all my relatives there except my sister, and wondered why she was absent at such a moment. The scene was as sharp and plain as if I had been watching actors on a stage. I saw my father sink back on the pillows, and I knew that he was dead.

Then my second self, or whatever you see fit to call it, seemed to resolve itself back into my material body, and I awoke, arose from the bed and cried out that my father was dead. I was told that I was suffering from nervous prostration and should return to bed. I obeyed, and fell asleep for about eight hours.

When I got up the vision of my father came to me in my waking hours with greater vividness than when I saw it in my subconscious state.

Two weeks from that date a letter came from England, telling of the death of my father at the exact hour and day when I had seen him, and with the additional information that just before he breathed his last he had seen me standing at his bedside.

The letter told us that the family had removed to another house which I had never seen. Subsequent inquiry showed that the room as I saw it in my strange mental condition was precisely as it was in fact. My sister's absence, which made a marked impression upon me, was due to illness.

CHRISTIANITY AND SPIRITUALISM.

From a report of a recent address by Dr. Peebles in Odd-fellows' Hall, Tampa, Florida, we take the following :—

To be a disciple, or a Christian, in New Testament times meant this : 'Love one another' (John xii., 35)—'belief in Christ,' with such attending signs, gifts and works as 'healing the sick,' 'gift of tongues,' 'seeing visions,' 'discerning spirits' and other spiritual phenomena. Do these spiritual manifestations that Jesus promised to believers follow the professed believers in Christ to-day? If not, then upon Biblical grounds they are unbelievers. These gifts, signs, manifestations and messages do follow and abound among Spiritualists.

Spiritualism is not atheism, nor materialism, nor sybilism, nor sectarianism ; but is rooted in and centres in God, who is spirit (*pneuma ho theos*), spirit, infinite and immutable ; and human beings, being made in 'the image of God,' are necessarily spiritual beings.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST ALLIANCE, LTD.

A meeting of the Members and Associates of the Alliance will be held at the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, SUFFOLK-STREET, PALL MALL EAST (near the National Gallery), on

THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 5TH,

WHEN

Mr. Angus McArthur and Mr. H. Biden Steele

WILL RELATE

'INTERESTING PERSONAL EXPERIENCES.'

The doors will be opened at 7 o'clock, and the Addresses will be commenced punctually at 7.30.

Admission by ticket only. Two tickets are sent to each Member, and one to each Associate, but both Members and Associates can have additional tickets for the use of friends on payment of 1s. each. Applications for extra tickets, accompanied by remittance, should be addressed to Mr. E. W. Wallis, Secretary to the London Spiritualist Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

Meetings will be held in the SALON OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF BRITISH ARTISTS, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall East (near the National Gallery), on the following Thursday evenings :—

Mar. 19.—REV. JOHN OATES, on 'The Spiritual Teachings of the Poets—Wordsworth, Browning, and Shelley.'

Apr. 2.—MISS LILIAN WHITING (author of 'After her Death,' 'The World Beautiful,' &c.), on 'The Life Radiant.'

Apr. 30.—MR. JAMES I. WEDGWOOD, on 'Auras, Halos, and the Occult Significance of Colours.'

May 14.—MISS E. KATHARINE BATES (author of 'Seen and Unseen'), on 'Psychic Faculties and Psychic Experiences.'

May 28.—MR. GEORGE P. YOUNG, President of the Spiritualists' National Union, on 'The Physical Phenomena of Mediumship in the Light of the Newer Chemistry.'

AN AFTERNOON SOCIAL GATHERING will be held at 110 St. Martin's-lane, W.C., on April 9th, at three o'clock.

FOR THE STUDY OF PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA the following meetings will be held at 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C. :—

CLAIRVOYANCE.—On *Tuesday next*, February 25th, Mr. J. J. Vango will give clairvoyant descriptions at 3 p.m., and no one will be admitted after that hour. Fee 1s. each to Members and Associates; for friends introduced by them, 2s. each.

TRANCE ADDRESS.—On *Wednesday next*, February 26th, at 6.30 p.m., Mr. E. W. Wallis will deliver an address on 'Heaven and Hell from a Spirit's Point of View.' Admission 1s.* Members and Associates free. No tickets required.

PSYCHIC CLASS.—On *Thursday next*, February 27th, Mrs. E. M. Walter will conduct a class for individual development, at 4 p.m., and on alternate Thursdays.

TALKS WITH A SPIRIT CONTROL.—On *Friday next*, February 28th, at 3 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis, under spirit control, will reply to questions from the audience relating to the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, mediumship, and life here and on 'the other side.' Admission 1s.*; Members and Associates free. Visitors should be prepared with written questions of general interest to submit to the control.

* MEMBERS have the privilege of introducing one friend to the *Wednesday and Friday* meetings without payment.

SPIRITUAL HEALING.—On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. A. Rex, the spiritual healer, will attend between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., to afford Members and Associates and their friends an opportunity to avail themselves of his services in magnetic healing under spirit control. As Mr. Rex is unable to treat more than four patients on each occasion, appointments must be made in advance by letter, addressed to the Secretary, Mr. E. W. Wallis. Fees, one treatment, 7s. 6d.; course of three, 15s.

A PLEA FOR A UNIVERSAL FAITH.

BY F. HADLAND DAVIS.

'Above and beneath and behind all religions there is one eternal, one universal religion, a religion to which every man belongs, or may belong.'—MAX MÜLLER.

Science has made an almost incredible advance during the last few years, and probably we shall soon be as familiar with airships as we are at the present moment with motor cars. The time may not be far distant when Mr. Louis Brennan's wonderful invention will be perfected, and we shall have trains running at an enormous speed on a single wire; but in spite of all the recent discoveries in science, religion, except among the few, seems to have made but little advance. England simply bristles with sects and schisms, with 'ologies' and 'isms.' We see everywhere religious labels with little or no recognition of the one supreme truth which should underlie them all. It is distressing to find so much emphasis in regard to form, so little generosity and tolerance for the real essentials of spiritual life. In Esperanto we are striving, with clever and painstaking compromise, to obtain a universal language, but surely an effort might be made to establish a universal faith by promulgating the great truths that it is wise to be good; that it gives joy to find and love the one God, and that it gives happiness to do unto others as we would be done by! The religions of the world may be regarded as the sides of a great pyramid, facets that reflect the light, which is shining above, in various degrees of brilliancy. It would be better to look toward the light instead of wandering round the sides of that pyramid and naming each side not our own, as pagan, preposterous, and altogether wrong. Upon the outside of many of the mediæval churches were innumerable grotesque figures symbolical of those souls outside the pale of salvation. But no one is outside the pale in the sight of God. As Omar has sung: 'He knows about it all.' He knows the hereditary taint we may have to battle against, the influence of adverse surroundings with which we may be hampered. There is not one soul that is not a part of God.

The idea of making heaven a glorified replica of the earthly life is essentially primitive. Countless examples of this idea are to be found in the ancient Egyptian tombs. The Rev. R. J. Campbell preaches what he calls 'Christian Socialism,' and in this teaching he claims to have found a balm that shall heal the aching hearts and troubled souls of humanity. The Egyptians believed in an earthly heaven, Mr. Campbell in a heavenly earth; but the earthly life is just a passage leading to another room. We have heard in the depths of our souls a sweet call, and we go forth through life into death, and through death into life again to find Him who bade us come into a great peace, a perfect understanding of all things.

We weave our own veils that separate us from Him, and the multiplicity of creeds and dogmas are veils hard indeed to brush aside, but God has worked them with forget-me-nots and olive-branches. The sound of Divine music, more haunting than a siren's song, leads us not to the rocks of destruction, but to the very fulness of a love that shall reveal to us the great secret that God and His children are one.

THE 'Christian Commonwealth' for the 12th inst. contained a notice, a column long, by Mr. Dudley Wright, of the work of the Spiritual Mission which meets on Sunday mornings at 67, George-street, Baker-street, W., and in the evening at 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-circus. Mr. Wright states the aims of the Mission in spreading the knowledge of life beyond the grave as the basis of true religion, bringing joy and peace to the soul, and continues: 'It is contended that many of the social evils of the day are successfully combated by raising men and women to a higher plane of thought in which they realise their duty to their Eternal Father and to their neighbour. They cease from doing evil and endeavour to rise, as a result of the development of their spiritual faculties. The Christ-love—the divine force of both worlds—enters into their hearts and lives, energising them to active service of God and giving them desire to bring others into His service.'

SPIRITUALISM AND THE S.P.R.

The subject of Mr. Robertson's address on the 6th inst. was one which could not fail to attract a large audience, and those who had not previously had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Robertson must, like myself, have been glad of the opportunity afforded them of so doing. It is stimulating to come into mental contact with such a vigorous personality, so ardent and whole-hearted, and absolutely clear as to the beliefs by which he is prepared both to live and die. Looking at him and hearing him, one could not doubt that had he lived in the days of the old Covenanters he would have gone unflinchingly and cheerfully to the stake for whatever he might then have believed. Mr. Robertson has, moreover, the gift of humour, which took the sting out of even his severest strictures. The sense of humour is almost—perhaps quite—indispensable to all who would pass sanely through life, more particularly to those who, in championing such a cause as Spiritualism, find themselves compelled to be belligerents. No one could accuse Mr. Robertson's utterances of malice, and even the pungency of his sharpest criticisms was qualified by his dry Scotch humour. I am sure that so outspoken a man will not wish others to be less outspoken, and will rather welcome criticism of his criticism.

Matthew Arnold defines criticism as '*a disinterested endeavour to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world*'; in order to do this it is essential that a critic should be something more than a fault-finder. It seems to me that as a critic of the Society for Psychical Research, Mr. Robertson has (if he will forgive my plain speaking) wasted his opportunity. The part of his address dealing with the work done by students before the Society for Psychical Research was founded, was admirable; but when he came to his main theme, the criticism of the Society, his utterances resolved themselves, firstly, into wholesale condemnation of it on the ground that it had confused the issues by theories of telepathy, subliminal consciousness, and the use of other expressions difficult to understand, and, secondly, into strictures on the attitude and actions of four of its leading men, viz., Professor Sidgwick, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, Mr. Podmore, and Dr. Hodgson. To some of these he dealt forth a *very* scant measure of praise with a very large measure of blame.

No doubt he would justify this passing of judgment on individuals by name, on the ground that the influence of these men has been the dominant factor in the work of the Society. But it is hardly fair to hold the Society responsible for their individual temperaments; and, moreover, as three out of the four have passed into the Unseen World, and therefore cannot defend themselves from any complaints which may be made against them, it is regrettable that so much of the address intended as a criticism of the Society should have been devoted to criticism of the personalities of some of its workers. Mr. Robertson seemed to ignore the fact that whatever mistakes Mr. Myers may have made (which he certainly would be ready enough to acknowledge), he devoted the best part of his life to an ardent pursuit of truth, and has by his work attracted wider attention to Spiritualism than it had won before he came into the field.

Passing by this, however, Mr. Robertson's criticism of the Society itself will not, I think, serve the purpose which useful criticism should serve, namely, that of indicating how matters may be improved, and stimulating his hearers (among whom were several members of the Society for Psychical Research), to try to improve them. His attack was too wholesale, and too vague; he had not a good word to say for the Society at all. Listening to him one would have supposed that for the last twenty-five years it had done nothing but mischief. Those who have belonged to the Society for many years, although by no means blind to its defects, recognise how much they owe to its publications, and to the education it has given in the exercise of discrimination and the faculty of estimating evidence. Many doubtless feel, as I do, that they would not now have reached the convictions which they hold concerning communications from the so-called dead, but for the apprenticeship they had served with the Society—an apprenticeship which enabled them to weigh many interpretations of the facts against the interpretation which they have now accepted.

Some of us must do this before we can feel our convictions strongly based. We must look at facts in various lights, and not until we have considered the arguments of various students can we form a judgment which is worth anything, as to what is the truest interpretation. The Society has greatly helped us in this respect, by bringing before us the most diverse theories.

'It takes all sorts to make a world,' and the methods by which the world is developed into fuller knowledge of truth are very various. We must take care not to throw down the ladders by which our fellows are mounting, because we may not ourselves require them, or to despise that for which we ourselves may not find a use.

The task before those who believe in the reality of a spiritual world, and man's future destiny, is so stupendous that we cannot afford to loosen the bonds which bind us to any who have the same goal in view. Co-operation is the word for the twentieth century. Co-operation and healthy criticism of each other are in no way incompatible, but co-operation and wholesale condemnation are incompatible. There must be appreciation as well as fault-finding, otherwise we weaken the whole band of workers and retard the work.

H. A. DALLAS.

As a member of both the Spiritualist Alliance and the Society for Psychical Research, I was much interested in Mr. Robertson's lecture and the discussion that followed it; and as one who has seen a good deal of the intelligent as well as the stupid outsider, I should like to offer a few remarks on the appeals frequently made through 'LIGHT' to its readers to further the spread of a belief in Spiritualism.

It appears to me that the somewhat changed attitude of the 'man in the street,' the increased openness of the Press to the subject of the occult, is due more to the influence of the Society for Psychical Research than to that of convinced Spiritualists. The tardy discoveries, as they seem to these latter, of certain leaders of the Society for Psychical Research will, if I mistake not, carry more weight than all the affirmations of the convinced.

If this be so, is it not due to a failure on the part of the convinced to properly produce their evidence?

First, as regards the authenticity of the phenomena. Many Spiritualists have mediums in their own families, of whose good faith they are certain; others, perhaps, have private and intimate acquaintance with mediums, of a nature to warrant belief in their honesty. But the outer public has not these advantages and naturally says, 'A. was tricked by his daughter, B. was humbugged by the medium for notoriety's sake if not for payment.'

I am quite aware that 'conditions' are very delicate things, and that the demand of the outsider that phenomena should be repeated for his benefit can often not be complied with—nay, that his very presence may upset everything. The work of the Society for Psychical Research, so far as it has concerned itself with Spiritualism, has been, I think, not a little hampered in the past by ignorance of 'conditions.' If this has been the case with an investigating body whose leaders have been men of marked ability, what must be the case with the average outsider? And what care is needed to instruct him on this difficult question if there is to be any chance of capturing his belief? If, then, he cannot be admitted within the privileged circle, to tie knots, examine chairs, search mediums, and satisfy himself against fraud, he is reduced to the evidence of others. Have sufficient pains been taken to place evidence before him? An instance may serve to explain my point. I read a book, by Madame d'Espérance, full of marvels. I heard her speak, and her manner gave me the idea that she was telling 'a plain, unvarnished tale.' But when my friends ask me what critical inquiry there has been into her statements, I have no answer to give them; and so on with many other mediums.

Secondly, with regard to inferences from phenomena. Here, I think, actual damage to the cause is done by the ignorant inferences frequently made by your correspondents. Someone visits a medium to whom he is unknown, and because he receives information known to no one present save himself, thinks he has proof of the presence of a departed relative. What about the possibility of the medium (in trance and in all good faith) reading his mind? He need not adopt this theory, but to ignore its existence is not the way to convince those who believe in telepathy but are doubtful of spirit return. Again, how frequently trance utterances are treated as if the whole came from spirits, without any hint of the possibility that much may come rather from the mind of the medium. The theory of verbal inspiration, ousted from the Church, finds many a cosy nest among Spiritualists.

If there is to be a propaganda—and it seems the natural thing that those who are satisfied should wish to hand on their belief to others—a much higher critical standard is required than at present shows itself among many members of the Alliance.

ADELAIDE E. GRIGNON.

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Cricklewood, N.W.

Having been present as a visitor, through the courtesy of one of the members, at the last meeting of the Spiritualist Alliance, I listened with great interest, not unmingled with amusement, to Mr. Robertson's spirited and sparkling paper, with its trenchant and stinging criticism of the Society for Psychical Research, its motives, its methods, and its men. Having belonged to that Society for nearly twenty years, and holding in high esteem the aims towards which its work has been directed and the spirit in which its researches have been prosecuted, I could not but feel that Mr. Robertson showed some misconception with regard to both one and the other. With the paper before one it would be possible to take up many points in detail, but that is neither necessary nor at present my object. I wish only to add something to the vigorous and outspoken defence which was so admirably sketched by two speakers in reply, members of the Society for Psychical Research and members also of the Spiritualist Alliance. The Society was blamed by Mr. Robertson for being cautious, for being critical, for being slow at arriving at results, and incidentally for taking credit for the conclusions at which it had arrived. Now the Society as such can only work with the material to which it has access, which is produced in evidence and brought before it, and a good deal might be said on that score and the finger pointed at those who, claiming to know so much, can yet show so little; but what I want to uphold is that the spirit in which its work is, and always has been, done is the right, the scientific spirit for this or any other inquiry. The correct, the philosophic attitude has been most tersely and yet fully stated by Macaulay in his essay on 'Lord Bacon,' and may very readily be adapted to the present circumstances. It may, he says, be described in four words: Much hope, little faith; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may happen, an indisposition to believe that anything very extraordinary has happened. That is the perfectly open mind, that is the necessary scientific caution, that is the true philosophic doubt. Can any thoughtful man, even a whole-hearted Spiritualist, himself convinced by some satisfactory evidence he has had, deny that such an attitude with regard to the subject is wise, is necessary, in view of the difficulties surrounding the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism, their paucity at present and their history in the past?

Sir David Brewster's neglect of his opportunities with regard to D. D. Home, and the natural but pusillanimous position which he assumed as soon as the effect of his only observations began to fade, make it painful to refer to him, but he was well within his rights when he said that the last thing he would give in to was spirit; and mark you, he did not say that to spirit he would never give in. Professor De Morgan felt it to be a solution 'ponderously difficult,' and how otherwise can it be estimated, how otherwise handled by those who are now and have been for so many years past endeavouring to fashion, to consolidate, to bring up to line and rule these rare and elusive facts so that they may stand the rain and wind of public criticism and the weathering of time, and form worthy stones in an edifice, a new and noble court in the Temple of Science?

To the unprejudiced observer it will, I think, be apparent that the Society for Psychical Research has, in fact, influenced public opinion to a large degree, and that very much in virtue of its cautious attitude and moderate tone. It has prepared the public mind—and in that term I include even leaders in other branches of science—for the reception of the startling facts of Spiritualism when they may be presented to it. The Society for Psychical Research has done more in this way than some Spiritualists evidently are ready to admit. It has done more, I am tempted to say, than Spiritualists themselves. Granted, at any rate, that it has inserted the thin edge of the wedge, let Spiritualists only bring forward their evidence, let them marshal their mediums and furnish the phenomena to form its base, and in the good work of driving it home they will find they have no more devoted disciples, no more ardent admirers, no more cordial fellow-workers, no more faithful friends than the presidents, the leaders, and the rank and file of the Society for Psychical Research.

HENRY D. R. KINGSTON, M.D.

Eltham.

THE UNION OF LONDON SPIRITUALISTS will hold a Conference meeting on Sunday, March 1st, at 417, Katherine-road, Forest Gate, E. Speakers: at 3 p.m., Mr. T. C. Dawson; at 6.45 p.m., Mr. G. T. Gwinn and Mr. T. C. Dawson. Tea provided at 5 p.m., 6d. each.

THE LORD'S PRAYER AS A CREED.

In a little book entitled 'The World's Prayer and Creed' (Samurai Press, 1s. net), Mr. Eustace Miles has taken the familiar Lord's Prayer and given us a new translation of it, in three settings, as prayer, affirmation, and creed. Prayer, he tells us, is not merely a request, it is a direction given to the mind, and may be considered as 'any means by which we realise a better state than that which appeals to our senses.' The English words which we all know by heart are an old translation of a Greek rendering of an Aramaic original, and the real meaning is veiled under Oriental imagery. In modern language Mr. Miles would phrase it thus:—

Our best Helper, within us and within everything, show us that Your ways are right. Be our sole Commander. Thoroughly as the sun and the moon obey You, make us obey You here and now. To-day give us just what we really need. Cancel our faults whenever we help others. Never let us be tried without keeping us altogether safe.

Some persons, Mr. Miles believes, can derive more benefit from an affirmation, and a very slight change in the language converts each clause into a statement; thus, 'You are giving' instead of 'give.' Again, if a creed is wanted, we can change the phrase to 'He gives.' Atheists, says Mr. Miles, may substitute a reference to an impersonal power and say, 'it gives.' For the more advanced, Mr. Miles has this parting word:—

Let us assume that our best Helper is within us, and act accordingly, treating others as our true brothers and sisters. When a Hindu Yogi sits in his cave and sends out his stream of thoughts of goodwill, health, happiness, and helpfulness for all mankind, what does it matter whether he says any one definite creed or any creed at all? Just as the man who lives the right life may have something more precious than a prayer of words, so this Yogi may have something more precious than a creed. He has a life: a life of helpfulness for others, which proves in the end to be a life of helpfulness for himself as well. Nevertheless, there are some who seem to need definite words to begin with. To these I offer this simple prayer and simple creed.

We might criticise Mr. Miles' rendering of the words in more than one place, and we may add that to send out helpful thoughts it is not necessary to sit in a cave; we can go among people and see their needs and help them practically as well as in thought, though we do not mean to imply that such thoughts may not bring spiritual help and comfort. What Mr. Miles says about true prayer being a realisation of a better and higher state, and thus a reaching out after helpful influences from the Unseen, is thoroughly in line with the higher conceptions of Spiritualism.

As showing the world-wide circulation of 'LIGHT,' our readers may be interested to know that on one day this week we received letters ordering books, &c., from Colombo, Ceylon; New Zealand; Melbourne, Australia; Honolulu; Hawaiian Islands; Natal, South Africa; Cambridge, Mass, U.S.A.; British Honduras; Central America; Central Provinces, India; Maryland, U.S.A.; and Holland.

MR. DUDLEY WRIGHT, to whose articles in the 'Christian Commonwealth' we have more than once referred, throws some new light on an old question in his booklet, 'Was Jesus an Essene?' published by the Power Book Company, of Wimbledon, price 1s. net. Mr. Wright describes the tenets and observances of the Essenes, who formed a sect of Judaism distinct from the Pharisees and Sadducees. As Jesus frequently reproached both of these, it would appear that he belonged to the third division, the Essenes, whose doctrine had an Indian colouring with which, on many points, the teaching of Jesus was in accord. Mr. Wright takes up several minor points in the actions of Jesus, and shows that they were in keeping with Essene practice. Several critics have denied that Jesus could have been an Essene; Mr. Wright admits that on several occasions 'Jesus broke through the rigid rules of the Essene order,' and shows that when the Gospel stories expressly state that his action occasioned surprise, the surprise was mainly that he as an Essene should act in a particular manner. We consider that Mr. Wright makes out a good *prima facie* case, though a strict demonstration is scarcely to be expected.

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APPLICATIONS by Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, Ltd., for the loan of books from the Alliance Library should be addressed to the Librarian, Mr. E. D. Godfrey, Office of the Alliance, 110, St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES.

'The American Baptist Publication Society' has just done a startling thing. It has published 'from the Society's own Press' a book by one of its ministers, George Hooper Ferris, M.A., which goes to the root of the matter by challenging the making of a New Testament Canon, and setting over against it the superior value of the free spirit, and the recognition of inspiration as an unexhausted and permanent gift from God to man.

The object of the book is to find out when the idea first arose that no more could be written, and that the collection of Sacred Writings was limited to a definite body of documents. 'Countless books were written in the early days to which the names of apostles were attached.' When did the sorting of Gospels take place, and why? 'Who determined that *four* was the accepted number? How was the decision reached? Was the man who reached it inspired? Did he receive a direct revelation, as authoritative as that of the Gospels themselves?' The 'Shepherd of Hermas' and the 'Epistle of Barnabas' were enormously popular in the early Church. Why were they not included in 'The Canon'?

The answer is that in the latter half of the second century an organised body of powerful ecclesiastics, intent on founding and fencing in an authoritative Church, made a stand against the free spirit, set up an orthodoxy, and made an inspired and infallible book;—a supremely good book, and probably the best that could have been made, but an arbitrary one, and one that stopped the flow of inspiration, and erected in its place a citadel for Rome.

Yes, in that one word, 'Rome,' we find the answer to many vital questions. Christendom was early taught to look to Rome for inspiration and control. Did it not maintain apostolic succession? Was it not both custodian and interpreter of the Divine Revelation? And was it not clear that 'the man who ties himself to the organisation is safe'? 'The whole matter was settled by the dictatorial "I." It was a fiat, and not an investigation, that gave to the world the final decision.' 'If you look carefully in the direction of Rome you will see her issue a list of the authoritative books of the New Testament about the year

A.D. 190.' 'Above the noise and confusion, sounds the voice of Rome. It speaks with authority. "We accept this!" "We reject that!" it cries. So was born the Canon.' All of which is sufficiently startling from a Baptist minister.

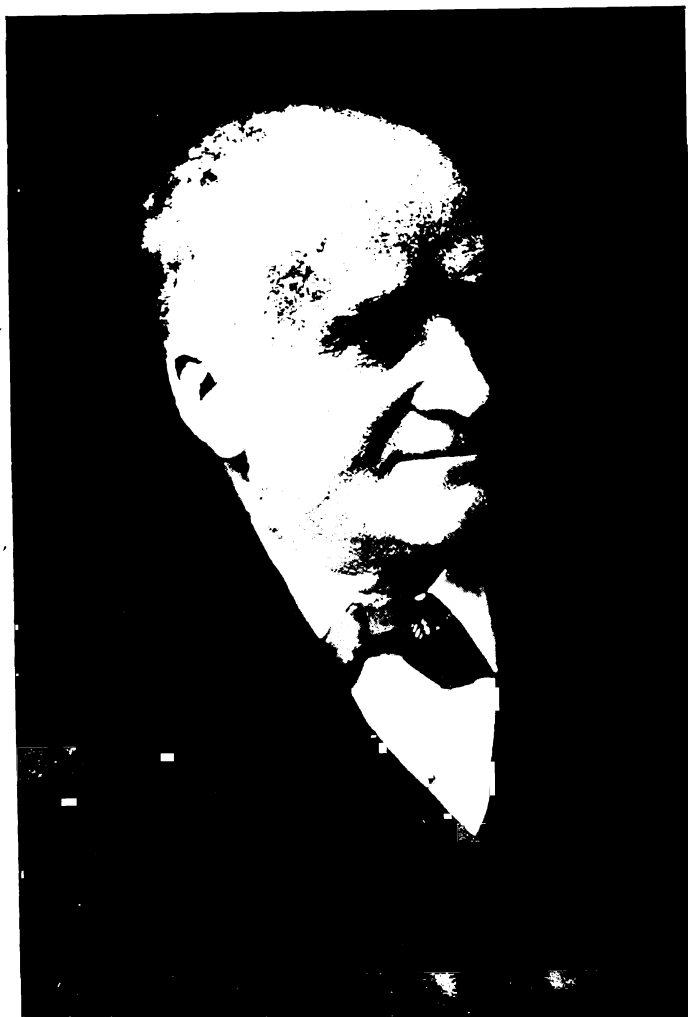
It is true that some central authority seemed needed. Right from the first there was clamour and confusion round the central faith and calm. The new-born Church was beset by wandering prophets, trance speakers, exhorters, interpreters, and blends of fanaticism and fraud: and it was difficult to sift, rebuke, or safeguard. It rained 'Commands of the Lord' and 'revelations': but there was no New Testament. Writings of various kinds flew about like birds that sang or croaked, and all claimed to be inspired. The only authority recognised in the Church before the year A.D. 125 was the possession of the Holy Spirit, and he was supposed to speak to Christians of the day in precisely the same manner as he had spoken to the apostles. No line was drawn between the two revelations. Some of the great Fathers of the Church, like Origen and Clement of Alexandria, even went so far as to include some 'heathen' writers as possessors of fragments of eternal truth from the theology of the ever-living Word.

It is sheer nonsense, then, to talk of the early Church as 'A New Testament Church.' That is precisely what it was not. It was a Church of the free spirit; and the formation and closing of a Canon was a direct attempt, and a successful one, to bind the free spirit with a book. 'The interest that closed the book was theological and ecclesiastical,' and turned more upon 'the ambition of a hierarchy' than upon the desire to disentangle and set forth a Christ.

Mr. Ferris fully acknowledges the immense value of the New Testament, but he manifestly chafes against the closure to which it bears witness. The books of the New Testament, he says, are not uninspired writings, but they must not be separated from the workings of God's Spirit in all his prophets, apostles and teachers, throughout all time. 'The age of the apostles must become part of the great, continuous, unbroken plan of God.'

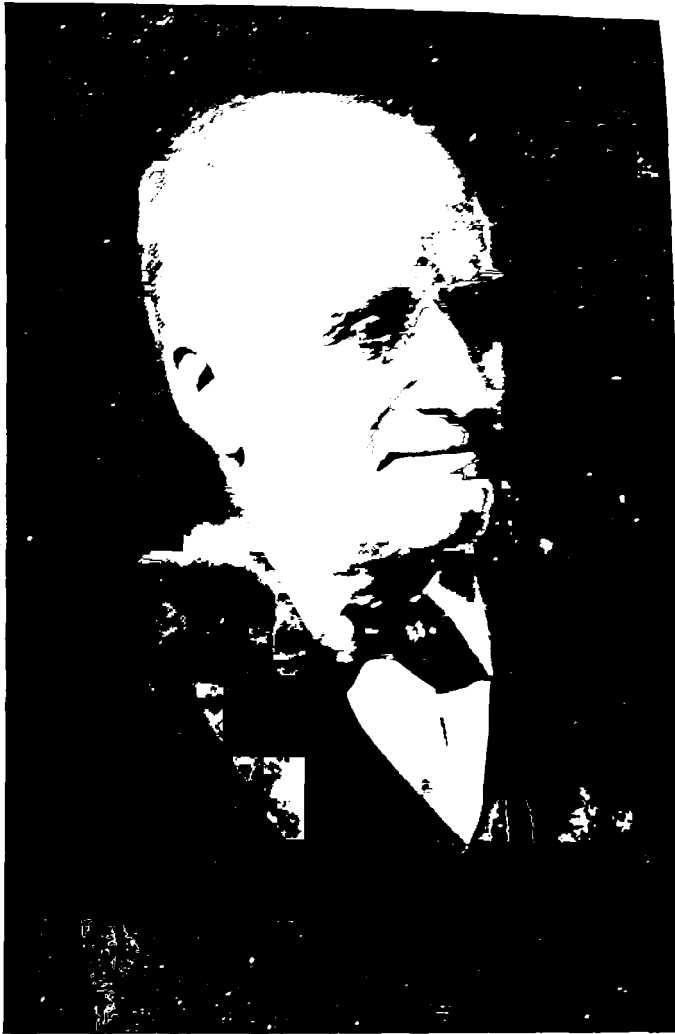
The misery of the attempt to shut up the fountain of inspiration, or to enclose it in the domain of a hierarchy, is well set forth in this amazing little book. It threatened spiritual religion, says the writer. The fruits of the Spirit, instead of being represented by the ripening products of an inner life, were to be seen in the copying of an outward pattern, and the performance of a ritual. 'The Church, led by its ardent ideal and breathless longing, left the broad platform of the apologists for the philosophers beyond the pale, but 'it is unfortunate that it felt that it had to pass on towards its goal over the pathway of intolerance, of creed formation, of unscrupulous exploitation of the labours of the philosophers, and of the narrowing down of revelation to a little book that should contain all the light and wisdom of the infinite God.' We still feel the incubus of the thought that in our day there is 'no open vision,' and that unless we can find confirmation of our plans and discoveries in the Canon we must abandon them. Thus we are brought to see the actual truth of the grim jest that the apostolic succession theory is like a great gas-pipe system which denies all light to those who are not connected with the main. But even that is better than the notion that 'shuts up Christianity in a first-century reservoir, and then abolishes the main.'

And so this amazing Baptist goes on with his sturdy buffeting of Rome and Geneva, and with his racy plea for the free spirit. It is all very entertaining and very suggestive: but the wonder of it is that a Baptist Society's 'own Press' should send it forth as the copyright of a Baptist Publication Society.



[From a photograph by M. Monapenny, Glasgow.]

MR. JAMES ROBERTSON,
Honorary President of the Glasgow Association of Spiritualists.



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MR. JAMES ROBERTSON,
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SPIRITUALISM AND THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

A REVIEW AND A CRITICISM.

BY MR. JAMES ROBERTSON.

An Address delivered to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on Thursday evening, February 6th, in the Salon of the Royal Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, Mr. H. Withall, Vice-President, in the chair.

(Continued from page 81.)

In the year 1882 certain gentlemen of note, who had been coquetting with the subject for some time, came into association with a few prominent Spiritualists and set forth the view that it was a scandal that there should be any dispute about the reality of spirit phenomena. They urged that the question needed to be determined, and that a society should be inaugurated with this object in view. The Spiritualists, who were certain that no amount of investigation could destroy or weaken their position, were most cordial in their co-operation. They had the idea that the principal object of the new body was to examine the Spiritualists' affirmations, but there was never any effort made to deal seriously with Spiritualism; what attempts were made were of such a blundering pattern that Spiritualists were satisfied that no convictions would be arrived at, and to their credit they withdrew.

The question of a future life is beyond aught else the great question; a truth compared with which it is of small moment whether anything else be true. Spiritualists had been insisting that the phenomena they had witnessed alone offered the means of establishing it as a fact. This new society commenced its inquiry by appointing committees to consider thought-reading, mesmerism, Reichenbach's experiments, and added apparitions, haunted houses, and physical phenomena as something to retain the interest of Spiritualists. I know that a good deal of printer's ink has been consumed in treating about thought-reading, &c., but the research into the physical phenomena of Spiritualism has been absolutely barren of result. The Researchers evidently had never heard that there was a Mrs. Everitt, in whose presence raps and voices could be heard, or that there was such a person as Lottie Fowler with her gifts of clairvoyance and clairaudience, or that a J. J. Morse entered into the trance condition and revealed abnormal intellectual powers. They never heard or saw anything which was of the least value. They did not know that Spiritualism had given birth to the most profound scientific setting forth of Nature's revelations through unlettered men like A. J. Davis and Hudson Tuttle. We have never heard that any one of the persons named was ever asked to submit to cross-examination. They never wanted to establish anything, but were quite satisfied to trot out their hypotheses in one corner and have them demolished in another.

When natural phenomena have to be investigated, it is essential that the observer be passive and look closely at what occurs in a truth-seeking frame of mind, accompanied by keen perception and common-sense. Unbiased persons would have inquired, 'Under what conditions did the phenomena which Crookes vouched for take place?' and it might be fairly assumed that these sages would have recognised that, given the same conditions, the phenomena would be repeated; but it seems never to have dawned upon them that the character of the manifestations was moulded by the mental and moral status of the mediums and the sitters. Crookes caught something of the method required to get evidential results, and his words cannot be too deeply pondered. When his modes are brought into play there will be less heard of fraud, and no need for the distressful 'tests' which rarely bring conviction. The phenomena will then rise beyond all the tests that could be applied. Speaking of D. D. Home, Crookes says: 'I used to say, let us sit round the fire and have a quiet chat, and see if our friends are here and will do

anything for us; we won't have any tests or precautions. On these occasions, when only my own family were present, some of the most convincing phenomena took place.' Crookes, no doubt, had seen that the power with which he had come into contact exhibited, at times, the most complete indifference to scientific theories, and would not be confined within the borders of any speculations, but made itself understood when the free-minded and open-hearted listened. Has the Psychical Research Society ever presented this aspect of kindness and sympathy towards those who claimed to have medial gifts? On the contrary, as I read, they have, as a rule, treated them either as rogues or automatons. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that these alleged 'experts' have given us nothing but confused ideas. It could have been seen from the first that it was not a demonstration of Spiritualism that was intended. Apparently there was never any desire to reach a conclusion as to the great central fact that the dead return; they were ever repudiating preconceptions and bias, and yet they never accepted anything which was not in harmony with some preconceived notion.

The Society for Psychical Research was an awe-inspiring body, on paper. Notables in abundance were to be found in its list of Members and Associates; no one could lose caste through being connected with such a body of respectables, while to be a Spiritualist was but another name for ignoramus and fanatic. Very many of the names, however, were *only* names. It was Sidgwick, Myers, Hodgson, Podmore, and one or two others who composed the Society, and I would like to look at them individually for a short time, and see if they ever revealed any special talents which would make them superior to the average man in the street as investigators of occult phenomena. I will begin with Professor Sidgwick, the first president, whose name is one we have heard mentioned with bated breath. 'Such a profound man!' everybody said. Why, I know not exactly. I have heard him described by those who were brought into close touch with him as a philosopher and a saint of the ancient type, but I am not aware of his being gifted with any special faculty for seeing the trend of modern events. No doubt he was a scholar and philosopher, whose great position dominated the younger men, who looked up to him as an oracle, pretty much as did those who gathered round Coleridge in his declining years and devoured his speech, conceivable and inconceivable, as heavenly wisdom, while much of it was really what Carlyle called 'bottled moonshine.' Sidgwick never seemed to have any settled ideas as to a future life. The Christian's hope of immortality was a thing for which there was no rational basis, he said; but, like Matthew Arnold, he felt that the absence of such a hope would be an evil. Why he ever troubled himself about the phenomena of Spiritualism is an enigma, seeing that he never wanted to get at the root of anything; his own words being, 'It gives life an additional interest having problems still to solve.' He might truthfully have classed himself as a waverer or an Agnostic, who never could reach any settled convictions. He sat with mediums year after year, but he evidently neither hoped nor desired to get satisfactory results. He might have gone on for a century and have found himself in the same position, because, while he recognised that certain conditions were essential in other realms, he considered that spiritual phenomena were different, and so dictated his own conditions. He admitted that he seemed to paralyse phenomena, yet he never caught the idea that certain vibrations of the ether were needed for their successful production, and that vibrations from the sitters might be as disastrous as the crossing of the telephone wires when one wishes to hold a conversation. But for the commotion inspired by his position, and the authority of his name, Sidgwick's colleagues would speedily have recognised his unfitness to explore such a subject as mediumship. As early as 1864 he wrote: 'I fancy I have heard the raps.' This gives us a revelation of his character: he was never quite convinced about the reality of anything. He was cautious, however, that even his '*funcies*' should not be betrayed, for he adds to his letter, 'but keep it dark about the raps till I blaze forth.' Of course there never

was any blaze, only blinding smoke! All his life he was a doubter, and I suppose the spirit people did not trouble whether he was converted or not, as he would have unearthed some theory to shatter their proofs and leave himself as unconvinced as before. He was 'the old man of the sea,' who rode upon the shoulders of his fellows. He failed to see that the laws of physics were not always applicable to spiritual operations.

Crookes' experiments would have been as barren of results as Sidgwick's but that he was gifted with a little more common-sense. He saw at a glance that material science could not arrange a successful spirit circle. 'Katie King,' the spirit, called Crookes' children around her, and amused them by recounting her adventures in India, but no 'Katie King,' or any other spiritual being, could have come within the sphere of the man who only got the length of *fancying* he had heard the raps. I hope we shall hear no more about Professor Sidgwick being an *authority*. In my opinion he was unworthy of even the slightest attention. He simply wasted years in travelling round a circle, without observing that it was a circle. We cannot call him a philosopher, only a trifler.

Another influence in this body of scholars was Mr. F. W. H. Myers, a man of quite another stamp from that of Sidgwick; but with rare genius, with the sweetest traits of character, he was continually dominated by his surroundings and afraid to give out all he knew or thought. At times his hands were filled with husks, from which the corn had long ago been shelled out. At other moments there was the appearance of living bread in his grasp. His was truly a dual nature. Did he meet a Spiritualist, he was strong in the faith and only wished there were greater marvels to believe. Let him again get into the Sidgwick-Podmore atmosphere, and his previous faith would vanish. He would once more hug to his bosom his favourite bantlings, telepathy and the subliminal self, and would talk learnedly about multiplex personalities, forgetting, for the time being, all the facts that he had met with. It was his association with the Society for Psychical Research that kept alive the sceptical vein. Naturally a spiritually minded man, he would have been fully satisfied with the clear evidence of spirit return which was all around, but that his nature was timorous, and though never dominated by Podmore, he lent himself too readily to adverse theorists.

He was a poet and essayist, but could not claim to be a scientist, although that would not have been greatly in his favour, for, as David Christie Murray pointed out, 'Your man of science is often the last man in the world to be entrusted with an idea, because he often starts from a preconception which he has to maintain at all hazards.' Myers' essays are truly spiritual, and convey the idea that he had something more than intuitions to guide him. He opposes Renan for his non-acceptance of spiritual marvels, and has almost a feeling of pity for George Eliot in thinking that immortality was unbelievable, and yet when he speaks from the Research atmosphere there is never any certainty. The balanced mind was continually lacking, so that even with his great gifts he would blow hot and cold alternately. Many years before the days of Psychical Research he witnessed materialisations through Miss Wood and Miss Fairlamb in Professor Sidgwick's rooms at Cambridge, but he kept the facts locked up in his bosom. It is only through the publication of Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace's autobiography that we get at the particulars of these investigations. Myers had no doubt that the manifestations which then occurred were genuine, and a hungering world should have had the facts placed at its service. His corroboration, at the time, would have assisted Crookes and Wallace in their controversies with Tyndall and Dr. Carpenter; but he remained silent, contented with keeping the records buried in his note books, until in after years, when the better Myers was uppermost, he read them to Dr. Wallace and expressed himself as quite convinced of their genuineness. Myers was ever afraid of the full force of the truth, and would tone down the more pregnant facts with some of his far-fetched theories. Dr. Wallace, seeking to place Myers' attitude in the softest and

most apologetic light, says that the introduction of such well-attested phenomena would have been out of place at the early period of the Society's working; but the fact that he gave no signs of possessing such knowledge during a quarter of a century needs some more cogent explanation; even the great book published at the conclusion of his active life does not contain a word on the subject. I hold, with Sir Arthur Helps, that 'the withholding of large truths from the world may be a betrayal of the greatest trust.'

I have heard it said that Myers believed in Stainton Moses beyond aught else, but conclusive evidence for this is sadly lacking. He got so close to all Stainton Moses' work that he might have reached some definite and clear conclusion, but there is a considerable amount of trifling all the time, and no statement we can grasp that this great seer established the fact that intelligence and knowledge survived bodily death. Stainton Moses was a robust thinker, who was keenly critical of all that happened through his own mediumship, one who faced and fought his doubts, only yielding when the evidence was overwhelming. Yet Myers' criticism of him was that he was without the critical or legal faculty! In 1894 the London Spiritualist Alliance asked Mr. Myers to read one of Stainton Moses' posthumous papers on 'Spirit Identity,' certainly one of the most evidential presentations of the subject that could have been offered. This remarkable statement of facts should have brought conviction to Myers, and perhaps it did, but the old spirit showed itself at the close. There were only some platitudes offered about being cautious in our affirmations, and exercising constantly the doubting spirit, as one who should say, 'Live ever on doubt, and thy soul shall be satisfied!'

What brought Myers rest and satisfaction towards the close of his earthly career were the simple truths of Spiritualism, not the psychical theories and hair-splittings which had taken up so much of his time. The people from that other world had been waiting at the door: he simply drew up the blinds, and there came to him knowledge which might have been his years before. His theories, in the light of the spirits' presence, were of little service. He opened his eyes, there they stood; he opened his ears, and those of the long ago were heard giving the message of courage and good cheer. It required neither literature, science, nor philosophy to get conviction, only the removal of the obstacles of his own creation. The spirit people came in and supped with him, and brought him at last to the realisation of the larger hope that had gleamed upon him so fitfully for so many years.

Another leading light I have to notice is Mr. Frank Podmore, one of those strange freaks who crop up in human history, like the sages who will have it that the earth is a flat plane and not a globe. He stands alone, conscious of his marvellous vision, and as he hears of others yielding to the spiritual hypothesis, he becomes more and more convinced that there is but one sane man left and that his name is Podmore. There is no wisdom or insight anywhere but what is exhibited in his own marvellous personality. Nature formed but one such man, and then the mould got broken. According to him even his great hero, Sidgwick, was not altogether an ideal investigator. Nothing is of the least value but what receives his own approval. Professor Hyslop's report is so much colossal simplicity, and Podmore can only hold up his hands in amazement at such an exhibition. As for Dr. Hodgson, he had been so completely hypnotised by Mrs. Piper that he lost his power of observation, or he would have protested against Hyslop's methods.

Podmore stands forth proof against a mountain of facts, and can show to his own satisfaction that the mountain is only a bit of conjuring and mal-observation. Not the smallest piece of spiritual phenomena is allowed to pass through his sieve. However eminent and honest his *confrères* may be matters not, they are dupes, every one of them. There never were raps heard under conditions where it was not possible for someone present to make them. Crookes might assert that he heard them, but he lacked hearing. Wallace was credulous, Myers without capacity, Hodgson hypnotised. In one man alone dwelt the insight to see that pure trickery was the sole

origin of what had been called spiritual phenomena. The Chinese in ancient times drew a map of the world, and outside their own dominions they marked, 'inhabited by barbarians.' Mr. Podmore has consistently and practically said: 'I am the centre of intelligence and knowledge, outside me are only blindness and desert.' Has there ever been such an exhibition of cool egotism and audacity as this man's assertions against the judgment of many of the ablest men of the century? Can there be any wonder that this Society, which promised so much, has accomplished literally nothing, when it has been handicapped by the influence of a man who freezes up all phenomena, ignores all conditions, and casts aside as of no moment the experiences of hundreds of thoughtful and wise people? To meet records such as Spiritualism presents with contemptuous insinuations of credulity and dishonesty is scarcely what could have been expected from anyone claiming kinship with philosophy or science.

I have only now to bring before your notice one other name, which has been sounded far and wide as that of a strong man, viz., Dr. Richard Hodgson. I do not for a moment place him in the same school as Podmore. There was a depth of power and application in him which, if for long it produced nothing satisfactory to himself, eventually landed him on the shores of certainty. For a season he seemed quite unfit to probe the claims which were made, that the dead could come into contact with the living. Some peculiar personal experiences attracted him to the occult, but he could not trust, could not rely on his own judgment. All professional mediums were alike fraudulent, and he had a special pride in his superior acumen to be able to get at the secret of all their tricks. He had a reputation amongst his *confères* as the great detective, and they no doubt thought that he had annihilated Madame Blavatsky for ever when, in 1885, he issued his report on his return from India. He went out with an eye focussed to catch fraud, and had little difficulty in convincing himself that only chicanery was the stock-in-trade of that remarkable woman; and so, in after years, with Eusapia Paladino. Whatever Lodge, Myers, and the other experimenters might say, Hodgson *knew* she was but an arrant knave, and yet the much traduced Eusapia marches on her way, convincing and converting Continental scientists daily. By going to America in 1887, as secretary for the American branch of the Society, Hodgson was placed in a new field of inquiry. He did discover that there was *one* professional medium who had genuine gifts; that a modicum of righteousness did exist after all. For nearly twenty years Mrs. Piper was the oracle on which the truth of a future life hung. According to Professor Hyslop, it cost the Society £1,500 for these Piper investigations. It was a long, dreary search, made all the more difficult by the methods which were adopted. Hodgson might read about the experiences of other people, but they were of no value to him. It is doubtful if he ever accepted physical phenomena as having any reality. Crookes' statements, he admitted, were the best attested, but he could not accept them as true until many additional cases had been given. I have often wondered that the spirit people in association with Mrs. Piper did not give up his conversion as hopeless, but no doubt they saw the day of triumph ahead. Research dogmas had to be adjusted towards the plainest facts before they could be accepted. What a web of prejudice had to be destroyed before the spirit voices could sound clearly! Ultimately the inner and the outer man saw that what Spiritualists had fought for so long was true.

The ripening time had come at last, and Hodgson's detective faculty and scepticism were found to be but obstacles in the path of the spirits. No doubt the work of Stainton Moses and the 'Spirit Teachings' were known to him in the period when his mind was holden, but Mrs. Piper's control, 'George Pelham,' changed the current of his life, so that when Stainton Moses had been translated and his group of helpers were free to work within Hodgson's sphere, he gave them the welcome of a true Spiritualist. He had pretty well done with the old state of suspicion, and was filled with the rapture which spiritual communion brings. He could hardly wait to die, and talked about that 'other side' as if it were at his doors.

'Imperator,' the patient teacher, was recognised as a teacher from the beyond seeking to proclaim the highest conception of religion, and was no longer regarded as a part of the medium's sub-consciousness. In the face of a real being of intellect and righteousness the subliminal exposition had to melt away, and he caught the spirit of those whom he had previously sneered at for being satisfied with facts instead of theories.

Hodgson's conversion came as a surprise, it was so decided. Mrs. Sidgwick, his one time colleague, might hope that he would modify his convictions, but that could never be. The spirit people had given him real knowledge. He stood on a rock from which nothing could dislodge him. Four years before his translation he was able to say, as the outcome of a powerful conviction, 'I think, for the rest of my life from now, should I never see another trance or have another word from "Imperator" or his group, it would make no difference to my *knowledge* that all is well: that "Imperator" and others are all they claim to be, and are, indeed, messengers that we may call divine.' Nothing could be clearer than that he had found the pearl of great price, and was courageous enough to express his convictions in language which could be understood. I need scarcely refer to the messages which he has sent to the earthly friends since his translation. One day, it is to be hoped, these will be printed, free from the accumulation of useless wordiness in which the Research mode envelops everything. But it is not to be expected that Hodgson's acceptance of Spiritualism will affect those who still wait outside the gates of knowledge.

Of late a new group of investigators has been heard of, not allied specially with the Psychical Research Society, but successors to their spirit and modes. Dr. Maxwell writes pointedly about the reality of the phenomena; he is never in doubt, like Sidgwick, about the raps and many other phases, and he has had sense enough to see that the medium's confidence and sympathy have to be won by the sitters throwing out sympathy, deference, and loyalty. Maxwell sets down the most conclusive evidence for intelligent spirits being the cause of the phenomena, but keeps harping about 'personifications,' what they say and do. He will not have the spirits—just yet; like Brewster, 'spirit is the last thing he will give in to.' Those who read will form their own conclusions, and many will recognise that we get nothing useful out of 'collective consciousness,' which is but a struggle on the part of a theorist to get out of a corner. Spiritualists know that the spirits are going to conquer, that Maxwell, Richet, Morselli, Flammarion, and others have all to travel in their own fog for a season only. It is satisfactory, at all events, that the members of this new school of Researchers do find that the phenomena are real. They have rehabilitated Eusapia and proved that the Cambridge experimenters were a body of weaklings.

If we want to get at minds which can embrace the simple, disentangle the perplexed, and enlighten the obscure, we need to go back to some of the earlier observers of spiritual phenomena. The following words by Professor De Morgan are of rare value when we contemplate the work of the Society for Psychical Research. He says:—

I doubt whether inquiry by men of science would lead to any result. There is much reason to believe that the state of mind of the inquirer has something—be it internal or external—to do with the power of the phenomena to manifest themselves. It may be a consequence of action of incredulous feeling on the nervous system of the recipient, or it may be that the volition—say the spirit, if you like—finds difficulty in communicating with a repellant organisation, or, maybe, is offended. *Be it which it may, there is the fact.*

Words such as these are the outcome of an exalted and contemplative mind. This man had an inner conviction which was not related to fancy or imagination. The story of the spirits' coming back to earth, which captivated the minds of the many I have named, cannot be ruthlessly passed over, certainly it is not the 'Proceedings' and 'Journals' of the Psychical Research Society that will accomplish this. Twenty-five years spent in dreary talk has been a waste of time and scarcely justifies the continued existence of this Society. Its name has been a mask. I know that there are some Spirit-

ualists who are simple enough to think that the men who form this Society are capable of sifting the grain from the chaff, but the unfortunate thing is that they have not been blessed with vision to recognise what is grain and what is chaff, and this pious opinion has to be hunted out from the minds of Spiritualists as having no relation to the actual facts. We, who have got volumes of indisputable evidence, have no need of patronage, no need to get closer to those who will not open their eyes, but persistently oppose the greatest revelation of the centuries. It was the facts of Spiritualism which at last brought Myers and Hodgson to see the light as we have done. We will not falter in our propaganda, but shall stand firm for the truth that the world of spirit is in touch with the world of matter. We know that this seemingly obscure thing, whose real glory has been unguessed, will one day mount the throne of the world and be recognised as the choicest, fullest, best gift of God to man. I cannot do better than conclude with some words from Stainton Moses' 'Spirit Teachings': 'The glorious tidings shall spread till the day comes when we shall be called upon to proclaim them from the mountain tops, and lo! God's hidden ones will start up from the lowly places of the earth to bear witness to that which they have seen and known, and the little rills that man has heeded not shall coalesce, and the river of God's truth, omnipotent in its energy, shall flood the earth and sweep away in its resistless course the ignorance and unbelief and folly and sin which now dismay and perplex us.' (Loud applause.)

At the close an interesting discussion was participated in by Rear-Admiral Moore, Dr. Abraham Wallace, the Rev. J. Page Hopps and Miss Mack Wall. Mr. Robertson replied briefly, and the proceedings terminated with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Robertson for his stimulating and thought-provoking address.

A SPIRITUALIST'S WILL UPHELD.

For a dogmatic trifle of the most approved spread-eagle type commend us to a recent issue of the American 'Law Register,' issued by the University of Pennsylvania. The 'Law Register' reports at some length the decision of the Illinois Courts in the case of 'Owen v. Crumbaugh,' of which it states the leading facts in this way:—

A testator devised his property to trustees to establish and maintain a Spiritualist church and library. He was a Spiritualist of a pronounced type, believing in many impossible occurrences, *e.g.*, that his mother, long since dead, was in the habit of coming to his room and kissing him good-night, and that his son, who died in infancy, had grown to manhood in spirit land, and had recently appeared before the testator and patted him on the cheek, &c. The belief was in accordance with the articles of faith of the Illinois Spiritualist Association, and the testator specifically denied in his will that he was influenced by 'spirits,' although strong evidence to the contrary was shown at the trial.

It is a pity that we lawyers do not, as a class, keep in closer touch with scientific and intellectual developments outside our own peculiar sphere of study. If we did, we should not be so prone to beg the question after the style of the writer in the 'Law Register,' who alludes to the 'impossible occurrences' as if their impossibility were a matter of common knowledge and, indeed, of mathematical demonstration.

Fortunately, the Illinois Courts were more liberal-minded than their reporter. They held 'that there was not a scintilla of evidence of insane delusion which might have rendered the deceased incapable of testamentary capacity, nor of any undue influence, and that the question ought not to have been submitted to a jury.' This view, eminently sane and reasonable as it is, does not meet with the approval of the 'Law Register,' which argues that 'On principle no reason can be assigned for taking from the consideration of the jury evidence of delusions (in the mind of a testator), which cannot be accounted for on any rational basis, merely because such delusions are in harmony with, or even constitute, a certain religious belief.'

The pronouncement here made, that spiritualistic beliefs are 'delusions' and that they 'cannot be accounted for on any rational basis' may be regarded as the verdict of the Law Department of the University of Pennsylvania upon the intellectual capacity of Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, the late F. W. H. Myers, and Dr. A. R. Wallace.

BARRISTER, LL.B., B.Sc.

JOTTINGS.

The spirited Address delivered by Mr. James Robertson to the Members and Associates of the London Spiritualist Alliance, on the 6th inst., aroused a large amount of interest and was frequently and heartily applauded. While some of his hearers felt that the speaker had hardly given sufficient credit to the Society for Psychical Research for the influence which it had exerted on the minds of many persons to whom Spiritualism was repugnant or unknown, the majority felt that there was so much truth in what Mr. Robertson had said that he was quite justified in expressing his opinions. As a correspondent writes: 'I am sure no one would take offence at it if they had heard it delivered, for the manner and the accent go far to disarm resentment.' A little breeze does no harm at times, and the transparent sincerity of the speaker won for him general appreciation. In these days of hesitating, half-hearted utterance it is refreshing to have fearless and outspoken speech—especially when the critic is kindly and honest.

The 'Hindu Spiritual Magazine' for January announces the decease, at the age of seventy-seven, of Maharaja Sir Jotindra Mohun Tagore Bahadur, K.C.S.I., who, it will be remembered, entertained Dr. Peebles right royally during his recent visit to India, and became a patron and benefactor of the Calcutta Psychical Society which was started at the instance of Dr. Peebles. The Maharaja was an ardent investigator of psychical phenomena, and witnessed a remarkable case of fire-walking by some Brahmins at Benares. 'A near relative of his, on seeing the Brahmins passing through the fire, was seized with the ambition of following in their wake, when to his surprise he found that he could do it without any inconvenience.' We should be glad to have further explanations, especially as to whether this means that anyone could follow the Brahmins without injury, or whether the immunity was due to an exalted state of mind, special psychical conditions, or spirit protection.

With regard to the replies, published on p. 82 of 'LIGHT,' to the questions put by 'A. V.' concerning spirits and spirit life, a correspondent, 'W. M.,' writes to ask whether these communicators can give any information as to the 'astral' or 'akasic light' in which all past history is said to be recorded; whether they or other spirits can see and read these records; and, if only certain spirits can do so, what is the cause of this apparent anomaly? In response to a previous inquiry, 'W. M.' was referred, on p. 11 of 'LIGHT,' to Denton's 'Soul of Things'; it would appear from Professor and Mrs. Denton's researches that the past is psychically recorded in some way, which is referred to by Theosophists as being 'in the astral light' or 'in the akasic records.' It is quite conceivable, without any anomaly, that the powers of perception of spirits may differ, just as those of the incarnate do; a spirit's range of intelligence may be expected to depend upon his development. We have archives and libraries here on earth, but not everyone is qualified to make use of them.

Under the title of 'Blue-Book Lessons,' Miss Lind-af-Hageby, Hon. Sec. of the International Medical Anti-Vivisection Association, has issued Pamphlet No. 1 of 'A Brief Survey of the First Three Volumes of Minutes of Evidence given before the Royal Commission on Vivisection,' in extension of her lectures delivered at Caxton Hall, Westminster. Miss Lind-af-Hageby is severe on the composition and conduct of the Commission, pointing out that the members should have been open-minded men, without professional bias, and that the experts and extremists should come as witnesses; whereas the chairman had acted as counsel for the defence of vivisectionists, and other members were themselves vivisectionists. During the inquiry, it is stated, 'anti-vivisectionist witnesses were repeatedly brought to book for supposed irrelevancy,' and for quoting the opinions of others, while their opponents were allowed to refer freely to unnamed and unverified sources of information. Eminent vivisectionists had compliments paid to them in advance, while an anti-vivisectionist was forbidden to read a letter written by Professor Huxley to Darwin, in which the humanity of a certain vivisectionist was severely criticised.

Under the Cruelty to Animals Act of 1876, the power to permit certain experiments rests with the Home Secretary, and, we are told, 'the system adopted by the Home Office of granting licences and allowing certificates under the Act is most satisfactory from the vivisectionist's point of view. The path of the intending vivisectionist is not paved with difficulties.' The inspection instituted by the same Act is represented as a farce, the inspectors showing complete deference to the very

men whose actions they are appointed to supervise. Their work is thus described by the chief inspector: 'I receive reports of experiments from the licensees, and from them I prepare the return which is presented to Parliament each year'; he only takes cognisance of breaches of the Act which 'appear from the return made by the experimenter himself' and which are 'mostly inadvertencies.' From a summary of the Act, prefixed to the pamphlet, it will be seen that while the first part of section three restricts experiments to those performed in view of new discoveries, provisos are added which enable the experimenter, with the easy compliance of the Home Office, to drive the proverbial coach-and-four through the earlier clauses, and the Act is thus rendered virtually inoperative.

Dr. Stenson Hooker, on Monday last, while addressing the members and friends of the Psycho-Therapeutic Society at Caxton Hall, Westminster, on 'How not to Grow Old,' explained that age could be warded off by persistent attention to diet; by moderating the food supply, due regard being paid to quality as well as quantity, and by judicious exercise; but late hours, exciting pleasures, and unhealthy surroundings made people prematurely old. The world needed 'suggestion treatment,' so that the ridiculous idea that men and women must be old at seventy should be discarded. If they kept themselves interested and busy in reformatory and philanthropic movements, and kept their hearts young, the body would remain young also. He advocated exercise for both body and mind, and as married people seemed to live longer than single ones, his advice was 'get married,' and get a pension—one which has been fairly earned. In conclusion, he said: 'Never worry, for that is fatal; be calm, serene, loving, and optimistic, for miserable, croaking pessimists soon grow old and ugly. Be temperate, simple, cheerful, aspirational, charitable, and in all likelihood you will live to a great age, and even then will not grow old, except in years.'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents, and sometimes publishes what he does not agree with for the purpose of presenting views which may elicit discussion.

An Acknowledgment of Books.

SIR,—Kindly permit me through 'LIGHT' to thank 'E. L. W.' of Leicester, for a parcel of books received, and to assure her that they will be fully appreciated by our members.—Yours, &c.,

GEO. F. TILBY,
Vice-President, E.L.S.A.

Workman's Hall (Stratford Centre).

The Ministry of Pain.

SIR,—Permit me to congratulate your correspondent 'Bidston' on the answer given to 'A. B.' in 'LIGHT,' of January 18th, with reference to 'Human Troubles and Spirit Happiness.' It is admirable.

I would like to point out how often many of us have been taught, either by direct revelation or by inspiration, that the planets are merely schools for our education, that adversity, or what we call misfortune, is one of the best teachers, and that sorrow and suffering are inseparable from our progression. Admitting this to be the case (and we all can see how character is built and faculties are developed, through the necessities created by losses, reverses, and new conditions), then it follows that a life of unruffled repose, ease, and luxury cannot be the best or the most conducive to attainments of the highest order, and it is rather fortunate that it is seldom met with.

The soldier who has never been under fire knows very little of himself, no matter how perfect his training and discipline in the barracks. It is only on the field of battle that he can develop his courage and other qualities of endurance necessary for the warrior or the hero. And so with all of us. Therefore, though we should always sympathise with each other and endeavour to share our burdens through that divine quality of love which makes us all akin, we should likewise realise that probation is ever inseparable from ordination, no matter in which of 'our Father's mansions' we happen to reside; and that tribulation and temptation are two factors indispensable to the formation of a high organisation and a true spiritual character.

That immortal document which we call 'The Lord's Prayer' contains sentences of the deepest wisdom—'Lead us

not into temptation, deliver us from evil'—showing how the human mind recoils from and fears both tribulation and temptation. They imply that the creature had realised that his Creator might find it necessary to put temptation and adversity in his way. Then those things seemingly to be dreaded and avoided as inflicting pain and bringing us misery, must be the tools which are employed to fashion us in *His own image*, and whether in *this* world or in the next, we shall learn and become wise and perfect, 'even as our Father is perfect.'—Yours, &c.,

FLORENCE MONTAGUE.

Montreal, Canada.

Man's Free Agency.

SIR,—Permit me, in reply to Mr. Tabberer, to say that neither conventional morality, legal enactments, nor sacerdotal decrees were referred to when the phrase 'the moral law is imperative' was used on p. 64 of 'LIGHT.' What was there referred to was the fact that there is a law of right which governs everything and everyone; no one has a right to do wrong. Men's views of right (of purity, goodness, and truth) may differ, but we owe it to ourselves to live healthily, purely, wisely, righteously. The law of health is the law of God (or of Nature), and no matter whether we are ignorant or perverse, if we do not observe that law we become diseased and suffer. Our intellectual belief, or disbelief, makes no difference to the operation of the law—although it affects our feelings as regards our culpability. Thus the law of our being is imperative. Its command is: be healthy; use your powers wisely; do right—or, in other words, conform to the law of health of body, and mind, and spirit. This obligation to 'strive to do right; to be pure, good, useful, and true' is imperative and *must* be obeyed if we would be at our best and attain the highest. It is the admonition (the beneficent law written in our nature), 'be ye perfect.' If we *strive* to learn to live in harmony with this law we may progressively grow in grace, goodness, purity, usefulness and happiness—but we cannot *break* the law; all ignorant or foolish or wicked attempts to do so inevitably produce suffering, until, like the colt, we are 'broken in,' and discover that within the law there is liberty. Love is the fulfilling of the law. We can only be free by loving and willing recognition and response to the call of the spirit to live this life of at-one-ment—our wills attuned (voluntarily attuned) to the Supreme will—then we steer *with* the current that makes for righteousness and are free to enjoy all the beauty and blessedness which ensue from health, use, purity, and love, and our influence and example are of service to others.—Yours, &c.,

B. G. E.

SIR,—I have been looking up some authorities in reference to 'Man's Free Agency,' and I find that T. H. Green, in his work on 'Philosophy,' Vol. II., p. 308, commences his chapter 'On the Different Senses of "Freedom" as applied to Will and to the Moral Progress of Man,' with these words: 'Since in all willing a man is his own subject, the will is always free.'

With regard to a man's power over his actions, he says on p. 306: 'There is no such thing as a will which a man is not conscious of as belonging to himself; no such thing as an act of will which he is not conscious of as issuing from himself. To ask whether he has power over it or whether some other power than he determines it, is like asking whether he is other than himself.'

So that in saying, as some do, that a man's will is determined by the strongest motive, they ignore the truth that his strongest motive is himself, and not something extraneous to himself. Professor Laurie says: 'To speak of free will is a mere tautology. Will can be nothing else than free and autonomous.' Martineau says that will is not an aimless act, but has an end or aim—it must have some idea of what it would be at.—Yours, &c.,

A. K. VENNING.

Los Angeles, Cal., U.S.A.

SIR,—Mr. Tabberer's position ('LIGHT,' p. 84) is simple, and his argument, as it stands, is unanswerable, viz.: Everything that can affect a man's action is environment, including heredity, which is past environment. Therefore, by definition, nothing but environment can affect a man's action. Q. E. D.

But is not this merely juggling with words? When we look at the word 'environment' we see that it presupposes the existence of conditions, material or other, which surround the man himself and are therefore external to him; he being regarded as a being, apart from his surroundings. In the same way heredity is not character; it is tendency transmitted from the characters of ancestors. Both terms recognise by implication that there is in each person an individuality of

character which is influenced, but not created or controlled, by heredity and environment. It is in the possession of that individuality that free agency resides, and the extent of free agency must depend upon the definiteness of the individuality and its power to distinguish itself from its tendencies and surroundings, for only by so doing can it free itself from their control. In other words, free agency is directly proportional to what we know as strength of character.

In reply to Mr. Tabberer's second paragraph, there is a distinct difference between 'the Moral Law' and 'the moral laws' prevailing in different states of social order. The Moral Law is immutable; moral laws vary with place and time, and some of them are decidedly immoral when seen by the light of the supreme Moral Law.

Mr. May, writing on the same subject, appears to lose sight of one side of the question, just as 'Ouida' exaggerates it. Many lead purely material lives, their whole interest being absorbed in their daily struggle for life: they have the spark of divinity within, but it is a spark merely, not a flame. A human soul is of infinitely more value than a grain of sand, but it may *apparently* fill a place scarcely more useful. On the other hand there are many, among all classes of society, who realise the concept of duty, calling them to make efforts to progress; and these men, hearts 'pregnant with celestial fire,' may be, each in his own sphere, of equal worth, if not of equal importance to the world at large, with Shakespeare, Giotto, or Burns.—Yours, &c., B. S.

Spiritualism and Capital Punishment.

SIR,—Permit me to draw the attention of all Spiritualists to the solemn warning from the spirit world, respecting capital punishment, conveyed through Stainton Moses in 'Spirit Teachings,' Section II., and thus to enlist their sympathy and support in the effort to obtain a revocation of the barbarous law which still disfigures our statute books. It is as follows:—

Blind! blind! you know not what you do. You are your own worst enemies, the truest friends of those who fight against God, and us, and you. Ignorant no less than blind! for you spend vast trouble to aid your foes. You cut from a spirit its bodily life. You punish vengefully the erring. You falsely arrogate to yourselves the right by law divine to shed human blood. You err, and know not that the spirits you so hurt shall, in their turn, avenge themselves upon you.

The early Christians denounced, almost unanimously, the death penalty, yet the modern followers of Christ, aye, even his highest representatives on earth, oppose the very principles of their Master's teaching by resisting humanitarian efforts toward the abolition of capital punishment. This supremely illogical attitude would be ludicrous, were it not pathetic.

Since 1866 the efforts of reformers have met with no practical result, and we still hold tenaciously to this form of mediæval barbarity; we still hang individuals who, apart from one passionate act, may be good citizens, free from all criminal taint, equally with the callous and deliberate murderers, who thus end (?) a career of crime and sensuality. Finally—the act is *irrevocable*. What compensation can be made if an innocent man be hanged? And there have been many such cases.

'What hope of answer or redress
Behind the veil? Behind the veil!'

—Yours, &c., JOHN CHECKETTS,
Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.
Margaret-chambers,
145, New Kent-road, S.E.

NEW PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

- 'Christianity and the Social Order.' By the REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A. Chapman and Hall, Limited. Price 6s.
'Transformed Hinduism.' By 'E. P. B.' Two vols. Philip Wellby, 6, Henrietta-street, W.C. Price 5s. net.
'The Zodiacus Vitæ of Palingenius.' Described by FOSTER WARSON, M.A. Philip Wellby, 6, Henrietta-street, W.C. Price 2s. net.
'London Matriculation Directory, January, 1908.' Burlington House, Cambridge. Price 1s. net.
'Was Jesus an Essene?' By DUDLEY WRIGHT. Power Book Co., Wimbledon, S.W. Price 1s. net.
'Christian Science: The Faith and its Founder.' By REV. LYMAN P. POWELL. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 24, Bedford-street, W.C. Price 5s. net.
'Thinking, Feeling, Doing: an Introduction to Mental Science.' By E. W. SCRIPTURE, Ph.D., M.D. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 24, Bedford-street, W.C. Price 9s. net.
MONTHLY MAGAZINES.—'Metaphysical Magazine' (20 cents), 'Prabuddha Bharata' (4d.), 'Review of Reviews' (6d.).

SOCIETY WORK.

FULHAM.—COLVEY HALL, 25, FERNHURST-ROAD, S.W.—On Sunday last Mr. Geo. Tayler Gwinn gave an earnest address. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Abbott. Wednesday, the 26th inst., at 8 p.m., Mr. Spencer.—W. T.

BRINTON.—8, MAYALL-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Clegg spoke on 'Lyceum Work.' On the 13th inst. a good circle was held. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mr. Cousins. On the 27th inst., at 6.30 p.m., tea and social evening. All welcome.

ACTON AND EALING.—9, NEW BROADWAY, EALING, W.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Snowdon Hall's reading, and a solo by Mrs. H. Ball were much enjoyed. Sunday, March 1st, at 7 p.m., Mr. Abbott. Wednesday, March 4th, at 8 p.m., social gathering at 2, Newburgh-road, Acton.

BRIGHTON.—MANCHESTER-STREET (OPPOSITE AQUARIUM).—On Sunday morning last good manifestations were obtained. In the evening Mr. F. Fletcher gave an excellent address. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m. and 7 p.m., Mrs. Wesley Adams; also on Monday, at 8 p.m., séance; 1s. each sitter.—A. C.

HACKNEY.—SIGDON-ROAD SCHOOL, DALSTON-LANE, N.E.—On Sunday last Miss Violet Burton gave an impressive address and answered questions. Miss B. M. King kindly sang two solos. On Sunday next Mr. R. Boddington will give an address. Soloist, Madame Leslie Dale, A.R.A.M.—N. R.

STRATFORD.—WORKMEN'S HALL, ROMFORD-ROAD, E.—On Sunday last Mr. Percy Smyth's interesting address on 'Social and Religious Workers' and his convincing replies to questions were greatly appreciated. Mr. G. F. Tilby presided, and Miss F. Shead sang a solo. Sunday next, Mr. H. Richmond on 'To Whom shall I Pray, and for What?'—W. H. S.

CLAPHAM INSTITUTE, GAUDEN-ROAD.—On Sunday last Mr. Swift gave an interesting and instructive account of his passage 'From Free Thought to Spiritualism.' Mr. H. Boddington presided. Selections by the band were much appreciated. Sunday next, at 7 p.m. prompt, Mr. Spencer, of Fulham.—H. Y.

PECKHAM.—CHEPSTOW HALL, 139, PECKHAM-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Miss A. V. Earle's address on 'Walking in the Light' was much appreciated by a good audience. Mrs. Barton presided. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., discussion opened by Mr. A. Barton; at 7 p.m., Mr. H. Wright. Sunday, March 1st, Madame Zeilah Lee, clairvoyante.—C. J. W.

SHEPHERD'S BUSH.—73, BECKLOW-ROAD, ASKEW-ROAD, W.—On Sunday morning last Miss A. Noel conducted a circle. In the evening Mrs. Podmore gave a good address and clairvoyant descriptions. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Miss V. Burton; 27th, Mrs. Podmore; Wednesday and Friday, at 8 p.m., members' developing circles.—J. J. L.

CHISWICK.—56, HIGH-ROAD, W.—On Sunday last Mr. A. C. Baxter's address on 'Spiritual Beauty' and replies to questions were much enjoyed. On Monday Mrs. Atkins gave psychometric and clairvoyant readings. Sunday next, at 11.15 a.m., circle; at 7 p.m., Mr. Samuel Keyworth on 'Sacred Writings.' On Monday next no meeting; Tuesday, at 8.30 p.m., healing, free.—A. P.

BALHAM.—19, RAMSDEN-ROAD (OPPOSITE THE PUBLIC LIBRARY).—On Sunday morning last an address by Mr. H. Richards on 'The Search for Truth' was discussed. In the evening Mr. G. Morley spoke on 'Priest and Adept.' Clairvoyant descriptions were given at both meetings, but in future they will not be given on Sunday evenings, only on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings.—W. E.

CAVENDISH ROOMS, 51, MORTIMER-STREET, W.—On Sunday evening last Mr. E. W. Wallis's brilliant and practical address on 'Spiritualism: A Protest, a Plea, and a Prophecy,' gave much pleasure to a large and appreciative audience. Miss Brinkley ably rendered a solo; Mr. W. T. Cooper presided. Sunday next, at 6.30 for 7 p.m., Miss MacCreddie, clairvoyant descriptions. Silver collection.—A. J. W.

SPIRITUAL MISSION: 22, Prince's-street, Oxford-street, W.—On Sunday evening last, at the second anniversary meeting, uplifting addresses by Mrs. Fairclough Smith were greatly appreciated. Mr. Haworth and Mr. Harper rendered solos. Sunday next, at 7 p.m., Mrs. M. H. Wallis on 'The Spiritual Nature of Man,' and answers to written questions.—67, George-street, Baker-street, W.—On Sunday morning last Mr. P. Beard's interesting address was much enjoyed, and the clairvoyant descriptions mostly recognised. Sunday next, at 11 a.m., Mrs. Fairclough Smith, answers to written questions and clairvoyant descriptions.

HOLLOWAY.—49, LORRAINE-ROAD.—On Sunday evening last Mrs. Baxter held a successful and interesting séance.—F. A. H.

GOVAN.—On Sunday last Mr. Kenneth McLennan's addresses and clear delineations were much enjoyed; meetings well attended.—J. W.